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September 26, 2013

The Honorable John McGlennon  
Chairman  
Transit Service Delivery Advisory Committee  
c/o DRPT  
600 East Main Street, Suite #2102  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Chairman McGlennon:

The Transit Service Delivery Advisory Committee (TSDAC) adopted a final white paper containing its recommendations on the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation's (DRPT) *Performance-Based Operating Assistance Allocation Implementation Plan* at its August 22 meeting.

While the City supports the proposal to distribute new operating funds based on performance, we remain concerned with elements of TSDAC's proposed methodology for allocating funds. Among other data sources, the current proposal relies on system wide Metrorail trips made by residents of Virginia Compact jurisdictions only. This approach does not recognize the substantial Metrorail ridership in Northern Virginia made by non-residents and thus significantly underestimates transit use in our jurisdiction and throughout Northern Virginia.

Northern Virginia, including Alexandria, has a vibrant tourist industry. People come to Alexandria to see both our local attractions, as well as those in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Many visitors rely on Metrorail for sightseeing, creating a cost to size Metrorail facilities and services appropriately. In addition, many visitors traveling to the region for business or leisure come through Reagan National Airport, which served over 19 million passengers in 2012, and many rely on Metrorail to access the airport. According to the 2012 Metrorail ridership survey, 3,150 people travel to and from the Reagan National Airport station on an average weekday, and over half of those riders originated in the District of Columbia and Maryland. An additional 760 passengers accessing the station daily do not reside in any of the WMATA compact jurisdictions. Riders such as these are not accounted for in TSDAC's recommended operating assistance allocation plan. This shortcoming will be exacerbated further by the opening of the Silver Line to Wiehle Avenue and ultimately to Dulles Airport. Both of these additions to the transit system will add significant numbers of people from destinations beyond Virginia to the Metrorail system.

*"Home Town of George Washington and Robert E. Lee"*

The Honorable John McGlennon  
September 26, 2013  
Page 2

In addition, limiting trips to only those taken by Virginia residents excludes workers traveling to Virginia-based jobs. Approximately 20 percent of workers in Alexandria do not reside in Northern Virginia and this number is likely to grow as major employers such as the National Science Foundation locate in the City. Transit facilities and their operations must be sized to accommodate these workers and the methodology for allocating performance-based operating assistance should consider these riders and the additional burden they place on the transit network.

The City concurs with the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission's proposed approach (identified in its September 6 letter to TSDAC), which would include any trip that either originates or ends in Virginia for the purposes of sizing the level of system utilization. We appreciate the opportunity to comment and are grateful to all those that have served on the TSDAC throughout 2013.

Sincerely,



William D. Euille  
Mayor  
City of Alexandria

cc: Honorable Members of City Council

Rashad M. Young, City Manager

Mark Jinks, Deputy City Manager

Richard J. Baier, P.E., LEED AP, Director, Transportation & Environmental Services

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